

Newsletter

Bruton

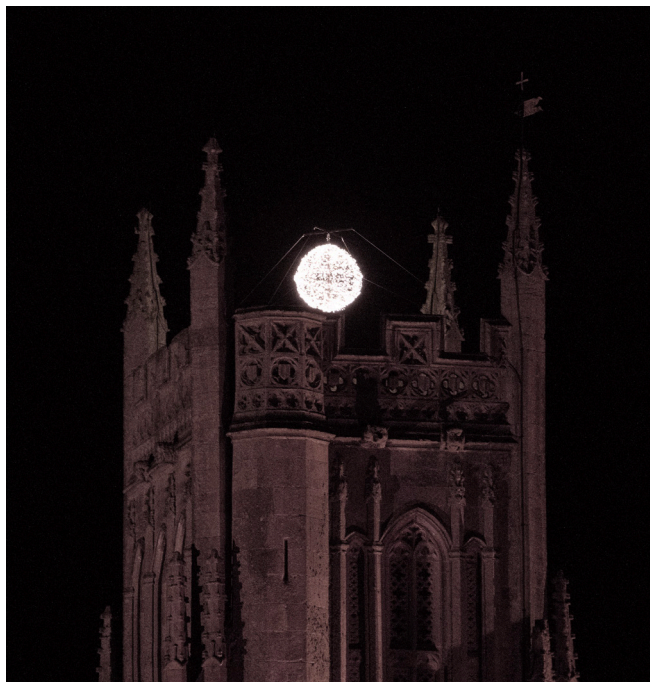
Pitcombe

Redlynch

Brewham

Shepton Montague

Wyke Champflower



St. Mary's Star ©2021 Stuart Anderton

As we turn over a new page on our calendars and contemplate what 2022 might look like, the reality is that, to some extent at least, this is up to us. We can be passive, responsive and wait to see what happens, or we can take a more proactive approach and try, by God's grace and in the power of God's spirit, to take the initiative and shape the future, even if only a little bit. In the life of our church communities, it is imperative that we are actively engaged in God's work; if we sit back and do nothing, we will see only the fruits of that inactivity. Let's make 2022 a year when we do more together; a year when we try some things – both things that we have done before and things that may be new.



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If you have something to contribute to a future edition of this newsletter, do please send it to the Rector.

Easy-to-follow details of how to receive this newsletter by email can be found on the St Mary's website, or email benefice@stmarysbruton.org. If you are aware of someone who might like to receive it but does not use email, please consider printing a copy yourself and delivering it to them.

NEWS

The 'Spirit of Christmas' tasting event held at St Mary's was a great success with many local people visiting the church who had never been in before. Over £800 was raised for the toilet and servery project and huge thanks are due to Julia and Aidan at Church Bridge Stores for conceiving and delivering this event.



Carolling in Shepton Montague

There was much carolling at Shepton Montague this Christmas – both an outdoor carol service in the churchyard and night-time village carols on Christmas Eve. As if that were not enough, a small group of singers sang carols at the Newt in return for a donation to the St Mary's toilet and servery project.

On December 12th Kit Hudson was baptised and welcomed into the community of faith at St Peter's Chapel at Redlynch at a very well attended service (over 50 present). Candles are an important part of the baptism ceremony and Kit's sister Ivy, who had also been christened in the Chapel two years ago, handed her brother the lighted candle. St Peter's Redlynch also held its annual Carol Service on Thursday December 23rd. This was also very well attended with a full Chapel. A lot of effort had gone into decorating inside and out with many candles in the windows also along the pathway giving a very welcoming feel to the approach. Mulled wine was served on the back terrace following the service.



St. Peter's Chapel, Redlynch

The 13 traditional cast iron fingerposts in and around Shepton Montague have been

lovingly restored in a project that began in 2018. More details about this great community achievement can be found in an article on the village website: <https://sheptonmontague.co.uk/parish-council/other-2/>

LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH



LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

Living in Love and Faith is a package of resources designed to enable church communities to participate in a process of discussion and learning in relation to questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. It forms part of a larger conversation taking place within the Church. Materials are provided to aid small group

discussions and facilitators are available where required. It is to be expected that in the near future General Synod will engage with some of the questions raised here as the Church continues to consider her practice and teaching. If anyone is interested in participating in a small group discussion, please contact the Rector. The national programme of discussion is due to end at the end of April 2022. You may know what you think and feel, but have you listened to what others think and feel? You may believe your opinions to be correct, but have you heard why others think differently?

ECO CHURCH



The Charity A Rocha UK, in partnership with others, runs an award programme called Eco Church, which aims to help church communities to express care for God's creation. This could be a very useful resource as we grapple with the practicalities of a journey towards carbon neutrality in our churches. If interested in exploring this, and making practical suggestions for improvements to our purchasing and our buildings, please contact the Rector.

GENEROUS JANUARY

Traditionally, the first month or so after Christmas sees fewer donations being made to food banks, after an outpouring of generosity over Christmas. If you would like to support Brue Larder this month, St Mary's is facilitating 'Generous January'. If you can bring a grocery item or two with you to church when you come, or during other opening hours, there will be a box at the back where it can be stored until collection. Whether you find you have over-purchased for the Christmas season, or find some 'buy one get one free' offers where you don't need the free one, it all helps for families and individuals struggling

in the new year. We are collecting non-perishables only, and please remember to check the best before dates (collections won't necessarily be taken away every week, it will be more flexible than that). Homemade items can't be taken either – but that still leaves lots of options! Thank you.

DEVELOPING OUR DISCIPLESHIP

A number of options are under consideration for small groups to meet to explore aspects of our faith (We would probably meet at the Rectory, although parking and access is slightly tricky there – if anyone else is willing to host, please let the Rector know.) Baptism is the beginning of a life-long journey of discipleship and all Christians should always be actively seeking to grow closer to God, through the study of Scripture, prayer, discussion and learning to love one another better. Spiritual growth takes a commitment and some dedication.

Possible fortnightly courses might be one of the following:

- A 'basics of the faith' course – looking at central topics including the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, the person of Jesus, Salvation, the Eucharist
- One of the booklets from the Pilgrim Course, perhaps looking at the Creed, the 10 Commandments, the Lord's Prayer or the Eucharist
- A study of the letters of St. John in the New Testament (1 John - 3 John)

If you would like to be part of such a group, please contact the Rector and indicate which of these possible courses you would be interested in attending (we will do whichever proves most popular and can run others on another occasion) and also indicate on which days and at what times you would be available.

Another course we might perhaps do in the future (if there is sufficient interest) is 'An introduction to the Bible' – learning where our scriptures came from, who wrote what, what sort of text the Bible is and how we might read it.

GOD CALLS... EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE

The Diocese is offering the usual Archdeaconry Days online this year – between 6-12 February. This will consist of short daily video presentations with different people telling the story of their experience of God's calling. The week starts with online worship lead by Bishop Ruth and ends with an online gathering where we will be invited to reflect together.

Details are available on the Diocesan website, where you can also sign up for the programme:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/faith/everyday-faith/god-calls-everyone-everywhere/>

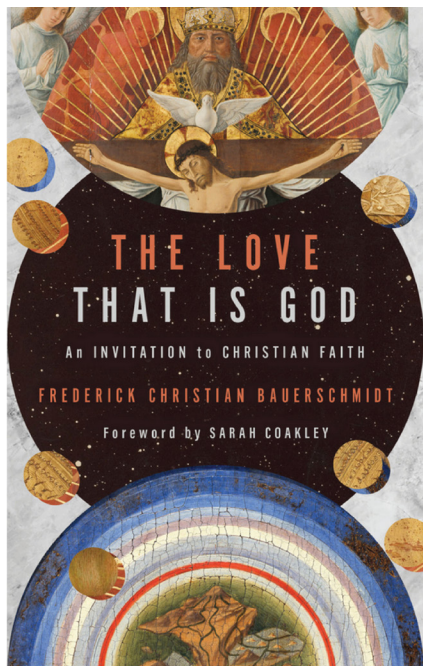
In the light of the discussions taking place on Bishop's Council and Diocesan Synod about the future shape of parish ministry in this Diocese, this is a topic about which we would all be well advised to be fully informed.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. MARY'S

Could you, or someone you know, help with any of the following:

- Taking responsibility for serving refreshments after services (organising supplies and a rota of helpers)
- Operating the Audio visual system (cameras and microphones) for Sunday services and some funerals/weddings, school services and special events– training provided
- Taking responsibility for putting out the waste and recycling bins on the appropriate days, and bringing the empty bins back in

BOOK DISCUSSION



Cover Art: Meg Schmidt

‘The Love that is God’, by Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt. This short book (pp. 125) is a meditation on the essentials of the Christian faith. It is deep and rich, yet accessible. The author unpicks what Christians mean by the claim that God is love and applies it to our society and our lives. This would be an excellent book to discuss in 5 sessions – perhaps during Lent? If interested, please contact the Rector and start reading... (preview available on publisher's website:

<https://eerdword.com/the-love-that-is-god/>)

DIARY DATES

- 19th January, Bruton PCC meeting, 6.00pm [venue tbc]
- 30th January, Benefice Eucharist, 11.00am at St. Mary's, Bruton, and Choral Evensong for Candlemas, 6.30pm at St. Mary's, Bruton
- 6th-12th February: 'God calls Everyone, Everywhere' - Archdeaconry Days

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